AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the claims:

1 (Previously presented): A method for protection of an excitable tissue in a mammal having a neurodegenerative condition, comprising administering peripherally to a mammal in need thereof an effective non-toxic amount of EPO for the protection of an excitable tissue.

2 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1 wherein said mammal has a neurodegenerative disease.

3 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said excitable tissue is central nervous system tissue or peripheral nervous system tissue.

4 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration comprises oral, topical, intraluminal or by inhalation or parenteral administration.

5 (Original): The method of Claim 4 wherein said parenteral administration is intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, submucosal or intradermal.

6 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration is acute or chronic.

7 (Canceled)

8 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is administered at a dose greater than the dose necessary to maximally stimulate erythropoiesis.

9 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is a recombinant form thereof.

10 (Canceled)

11 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the amount of EPO is administered prior to a medical or surgical procedure.

12 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 11, wherein the EPO is administered at least one time 4 hours to 24 hours prior to the medical or surgical procedure.

13 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 11, wherein the medical procedure is labor or childbirth.

14 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 11, wherein the surgical procedure is tumor resection, aneurysm repair, or a coronary artery bypass procedure.

15 (Currently amended): A method for ~~treating or protecting against injury or damage to neural tissue~~ protection of an excitable tissue in a mammal having mechanical trauma, multiple sclerosis, diabetic neuropathy, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, toxicity, hypoxia, or encephalomyelitis comprising administering peripherally to a mammal in need thereof an effective non-toxic amount of EPO for the ~~treatment or~~ protection of ~~the neural tissue~~ an excitable tissue.

16 (Cancelled)

17 (Currently amended): The method of Claim 15 wherein said ~~neural~~ excitable tissue is central nervous system tissue or peripheral nervous system tissue.

18 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 15 wherein said administration comprises oral, topical, intraluminal or by inhalation or parenteral administration.

19 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 18 wherein said parenteral administration is intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, submucosal or intradermal.

20 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 15 wherein said administration is acute or chronic.

21 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 15 wherein said EPO is administered at a dose greater than the dose necessary to maximally stimulate erythropoiesis.

22 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 15 wherein said EPO is a recombinant form thereof.

23 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 15, wherein the amount of EPO is administered prior to a medical or surgical procedure.

24 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 23, wherein the EPO is administered at least one time 4 hours to 24 hours prior to the medical or surgical procedure.

25 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 23, wherein the medical procedure is labor or childbirth.

26 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 23, wherein the surgical procedure is tumor resection, aneurysm repair, or a coronary artery bypass procedure.

27 (Cancelled)